

AGENDA ITEM X-K

Consideration of adopting amendments to Sections 4.22 and 4.23 of Board rules and adding Section 4.35 to Board rules, concerning the Texas Common Course Numbering System (Second Consideration)

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt amendments to Sections 4.22 and 4.23 of Board rules and add Section 4.35 to Board rules, concerning the Texas Common Course Numbering System

Summary:

The Board proposed these amendments at its January 2004 meeting. Staff is recommending that the Board adopt all of the amendments.

Senate Bill 286 of the 78th Texas Legislature amended Texas Education Code, Section 61.832, to require the Board to approve a common course numbering system for use by the institutions.

Staff is recommending the proposed amendments to Sections 4.22 and 4.23 to designate the Texas Common Course Numbering System (TCCNS) as the approved common course numbering system, and to require the institutions to use the TCCNS in their printed and electronic catalogs, course listings, and any other appropriate information resources. For those colleges and universities that maintain their own institutional course numbering systems, the amendments also provide guidance on the appropriate display of TCCNS numbers in these materials and require each institution to comply with the requirements of these sections no later than September 1, 2005.

Staff has advocated the use of a common course numbering system for lower-division courses to facilitate the transfer of academic credit, especially for the core curriculum and field of study curricula. The proposed amendments are based on recommendations from the Transfer Issues Advisory Committee and reflect a consensus among the community college and university representatives who make up the membership of that advisory committee.

The amendments add the statutory citation for the Coordinating Board's authority to approve the TCCNS, and add a formal definition of the TCCNS. Existing rules are expanded to include a new section (Section 4.35) that would approve the use of the TCCNS by institutions of higher education, as required in statute. A uniform manner of use would be prescribed in this section for all institutions of public higher education.

Date Presented to the Board for Publication in the Texas Register:

April 22, 2004

Date Published in the Texas Register:

February 20, 2004

Summary of comments received:

Comment from Angelo State University (ASU): (summarized) Publication schedules for printed catalogs are far in advance. ASU is preparing its 2005-2007 catalog now. Will the rule apply to catalogs or publications produced after 9/1/05 or publications with information for the semester encompassing 9/1/05? Although this is noted as having no fiscal impact, these changes will require significant staff time, at least initially, to connect the proper equivalencies to the courses listed in the bulletin and the schedule.

Staff Response: The rules will apply to catalogs or publications produced after 9/1/05. Institutions will need to have reviewed and identified all lower-division courses they offer that have equivalents through the TCCNS before that deadline. The impact statement considers fiscal implications to state or local government, not to individual colleges and universities. Staff agrees that universities especially will incur some staff cost in reviewing and identifying their institution's lower-division courses that have TCCNS equivalents and modifying their informational resources.

Comment from Texas A&M University–Kingsville (TAMUK): (1) Will the common course number have to be displayed next to the TAMUK course number when listed in the degree plan requirements in our catalogue? Since the numbers will be indicated beside the TAMUK number in the course descriptions portion of the catalog, we think this will be duplicative and could possibly lead to confusion. (2) Does the common course number need to be displayed by each course in the *Class Schedule* that is published each semester? Our schedule is computer-generated in a prescribed format. To include the TCCNS in the schedule will involve manual manipulation and will considerably slow down the process of creating the course schedule.

Staff Response: The purpose of the rules is to provide clear, consistent communication to students about TCCNS and its use in institutional catalogs and other appropriate informational resources. Display of the TCCNS number next to the institution's own course number at the beginning of the course description will be sufficient. A clause to that effect has been added to clarify Section 4.35(a)(1). As long as the catalog and other informational resources include the TCCNS number next to the institution's own course number at the beginning of the course description, and the other provisions of the relevant rules are observed, it is not necessary to include the TCCNS number at each instance a course is cited in a degree plan/course outline, or in course schedule listing publications that change from term to term.

Comment from University of North Texas (UNT): At the present time, UNT meets all of the mandates set forth by the proposal.

Staff Response: That comment contained no objections to the amendments and did not require any changes to the proposed amendments.

Impact (including fiscal):

There will be no fiscal implications to state or local government.

Advisory Committee Statement:

The Transfer Issues Advisory Committee made recommendations concerning the TCCNS and its use by colleges and universities. Amendments recommended by staff are consistent with those recommendations.

Legal Consideration:

Approved by the Office of General Counsel _____ Date: _____

The proposed amendments have been prepared in the following format:

- New language is in lowercase, underlined, and shaded.
- Deleted language is bracketed and struck through.
- When new language replaces deleted language, the new language precedes the deleted language.